

SECRET CONTINUED

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP  
Washington, D.C.

COUNTRY : Japan, Germany.

SUBJECT : March 1945 attempt by VON RIBBENTROP to secure a separate peace between Germany and the USSR through Japanese intermediaries.

DATE OF INFORMATION: as indicated in subject.

EVALUATION : H-2.

REFERENCES : (a) Japanese wartime Intelligence Activities in Northern Europe: ISU, 30 September 1946, IS #1225.  
(b) ISU, Major General Nakoto - Biographical Sketch of ISU, 25 September 1946, IS #1226.  
(c) Nakoto's version of Swedish offers to initiate peace negotiations between Japan and the Western Allies: ISU, 7 October 1946, IS #1244.

1. The following account was given by the subject of Reference (b) during his interrogation at Sugamo Prison in Tokyo (6 May - 20 July 1946) by a representative of ISU, and may be of interest in connection with what is already known about ONODA's role as a Japanese intelligence figure operating in Sweden.

2. On 22 March 1945 ONODA received the following telegram from General KOMATSU, the Military Attache' in Berlin: "Ambassador OSHIDA and I request your presence in Berlin on an important and urgent matter. This is to be kept secret from Minister [to Sweden] BRANSTEN." ONODA at once notified Berlin that he would comply with the request and left by plane on the 27th accompanied by Assistant Military Attache' KIKUCHI.

When he arrived in Berlin he was immediately taken to Ambassador OSHIDA, who related that he had had several conversations with VON RIBBENTROP concerning an attempt to bring about a separate peace between the USSR and Germany, and concerning the part which the Japanese might be willing to play as intermediaries. VON RIBBENTROP saw such a peace as the only way by which Germany could successfully come out of the military situation existing at that time. He proposed that the matter be handled by a Japanese diplomat in Stockholm because he wanted to avoid working directly through Moscow or Tokyo.

OSHIDA described the prospect in detail and asked ONODA, as an old friend, to accept this task on behalf of Japan and Germany, never forgetting, of course, that Japanese interests were always to come first. He added that, although it was a political question and should normally be carried out by the

DB #1240

SECRET CONTINUED

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT

Declassified and Approved for Release  
by the Central Intelligence Agency  
Date: 3-005

SECRET CONTROL

Minister to Sweden, he did not consider OKAMOTO capable of handling it.

The following other Japanese were present at the discussions: General NOMATSU, his assistant Colonel ROTARY, and Counsellor KAWAHARA and Secretary UCHIDA of the Embassy. This group studied the question in all its aspects. They were very skeptical and their opinion was that such political action had no possible outcome unless some unexpected miracle should happen. Nevertheless, they decided to take the necessary initial steps in Stockholm.

Their plan was as follows: ONODERA was to return to Stockholm and make contact immediately with one of the leading personalities in the Soviet Legation -- if possible, Colonel TAKASHI, the Military Attaché whom he already knew. Upon securing the agreement of this person he was to arrange for a meeting between ONODERA and JAWUCZOW (they were old friends) so that discussions could begin as soon as possible for a meeting between Von RIBBENTROP and MOLOTOV somewhere on the Eastern front.

On 20 March, after initial preparations had been made, ONODERA visited Von RIBBENTROP and informed him that the Japanese were prepared to act. Von RIBBENTROP thanked him and said that he was only waiting for the Fuehrer's agreement, which he hoped to obtain at any moment. However, on the same night he came to the Japanese Embassy and told ONODERA that HITLER had categorically refused to agree to the plan and still hoped for victory in the East. He went on to say that nevertheless he had not abandoned the plan and wished the Japanese not to cancel any of their preparations. He asked ONODERA to stand ready for any eventuality and to inform General ONODERA of the current state of affairs.

ONODERA then cabled an account of what was happening to the Foreign Office in Tokyo, explaining away the total absence of any ranking Japanese diplomat from Stockholm in the proceedings by saying that ONODERA had happened to be in Berlin at the time and that he had been chosen because he was a Russian specialist and spoke the language well.

ONODERA returned to Stockholm on 30 March. He found his contacts in the Soviet Legation absent and so was unable to take any immediate action. He decided to wait for word from Berlin that HITLER had changed his mind, but it never came and therefore no further steps in the negotiations were ever taken.

ONODERA describes the basic reason for Von RIBBENTROP's attempt as follows: At the time of the Yalta conference the Germans had intercepted a telegram from the Polish minister in Syria to his government stating that, at the conference, STALIN had become convinced that the policy of the western Allies was to allow the Germans and the Soviets to exterminate each other so that eventually they might both be reduced to the condition of vassal states. Accordingly, Von RIBBENTROP hoped that the Soviets might be willing to discuss a separate peace and was prepared to base it on two conditions: (a) the total occupation of Europe by Soviet forces, and (b) a guarantee that Germany's historical boundaries would not be changed.

Distribution:

G-2, CINCAPPAC, Tokyo  
ID-WDGS (1)  
ONI (5)  
State (1)

- 2 -

SECRET CONTROL